



Coordinating McKinney-Vento and Title I, Part A Programs

January 20, 2011

WEBINAR

Student Achievement and School Accountability Programs

Office of Elementary and Secondary Education

Slide 5: Agenda

Thank you, Pat, for that introduction and to SASA for offering the topic of McKinney-Vento and Title I Coordination first for our new technical assistance series on program improvement. We really are honored to headline the series and have this opportunity to address a very important audience, perhaps the most important audience, to coordinate with the Education for Homeless Children and Youth program. Our targeted program serves just one of many special populations that the Title I program serves, but you will see later that there are significant overlaps among our populations. As a much larger program, Title I, Part A is the most important one for us to coordinate with and over the past few years we've made a greater effort to provide additional technical assistance to homeless education and Title I audiences. Some of you may have heard a presentation Gary Rutkin and I gave at the Title I Conference here in the DC area almost exactly one year ago. If so, you will find that many of these slides are similar: As the agenda indicates, we will focus on the statutory basis for various points of coordination and provide examples of some SEAs and LEAs exceeding minimum expectations. We do hope to have a full 10 or 15 minutes for questions and comments as we know that this topic also presents many challenges for both programs and we appreciate your honest remarks as we develop further technical assistance in this area. Before we get this far, let me turn the floor over to Gary, who will review background on definitions of eligibility, current data and trends, as well as subgrant funding.

Slide 6: Background Data and Funding

Thank you, John, for setting up this presentation.

Bullet One: Many of you are well aware that the number of homeless children and youth has been increasing by double-digits over the past few years. We've seen a 40% increase since 2007 to 957,000 students identified by June 2009 and preliminary data through June 2010 indicates that that number will hold steady. Now, if Title I serves about 18 million students, we are estimating that somewhat over 5% of those students have experienced homelessness at some point in the school year; one research estimates is as high as 10% of the free and reduced price meal student population and another recent report by the National Center for Family Homelessness estimated that 2% of all enrolled public school students nationally experience homelessness at some point during the calendar year. So, as high as our annual counts have gotten, we know that they are still an undercount.

Bullet Two: Our annual appropriation has been level for the past few years at \$65.4 million except for Fiscal Year 2009 when the program received \$70 million in American Recovery and Reinvestment Act funds. Those funds are available for obligation until September 30, 2011.

Bullet Three: At least 75% of this appropriation is competitively awarded to LEAs by SEAs (except for the ARRA funds) and that covers approximately 11% of all 15,000 LEAs and almost 60% of all homeless students identified by all LEAs.

Bullet Four: By comparison, Title I, Part A reaches over 80% of LEAs and has an appropriation of \$14 billion, so we recognize it as the most important source of Federal funding for instructional and educational support services for homeless students. We of course thank you for the efforts you have made these past years during difficult economic times, with a housing crisis happening at the same time.

Slide 7: EHCY Definition of Homelessness

The next two slides review the definition of which children and youth may be identified as homeless and be eligible for McKinney-Vento and Title I services. I am sure that many of you are familiar with it and

already know that it varies from the definition Housing and Urban Development uses for homelessness assistance. The Education definition is used not only in the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act, which is cross-referenced in the Elementary and Secondary Education Act, but it is also used in the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, the Head Start Act and other statutes for Federal programs serving homeless children and youth such as USDA's Child Nutrition program. The key distinctions are that we recognize children and youth in doubled-up situations, substandard housing, and all hotels and motels as homeless. When you see trailer parks listed here—that was a misnomer, it means trailers in camping grounds.

Slide 8: EHCY Definition of Homelessness, Part II

We also serve children and youth awaiting foster care placement, although that has been left to each SEA and/or LEA to decide with their public child welfare agency counterpart. The middle two bullet points match HUD's definition except for our mention of "substandard housing". The fourth bullet indicates that migrant students can be homeless but they must meet the above criteria.

Slide 9: Primary Nighttime Residence Data

In this pie chart, you will see that about 2/3 of our identified student population is doubled-up. The definition of doubled-up is lacking a fixed, adequate and regular nighttime residence, sharing the housing of others, due to loss of housing, economic hardship or other reasons, commonly such as fleeing domestic violence or abuse. We also have about a quarter of our population in shelters, and smaller percentages in hotels/motels or on the streets and in campgrounds or barns. The determination of eligibility is based on an interview with the district homeless liaison or designee as well as some auditable and verifiable record of identification in the LEA: this may be an individual enrollment form, or some kind of paper or electronic record. We allow students to keep their homeless status until the start of the next school year to promote school stability and the right to remain in the school of origin

until the end of the school year, because many students are likely to experience multiple episodes of homelessness during the year. We only track one primary nighttime residence for that year though.

Slide 10: Subpopulations of Homeless Students Served (by subgrants)

Homeless students overlap with many other subgroups of at-risk or disadvantaged students identified under ESEA, as you can see in the table on this slide. We also have our own unique subgroup of unaccompanied homeless youth, who are of no defined minimum or maximum age, homeless, and not in the physical custody of a parent or guardian. All of these subgroups have shown substantial increases in numbers over the past few years: students with disabilities or who are English language learners are about 15% of our served population, unaccompanied youth are about 10% and migrant students are 1.5%. We are also aware of racial and ethnic disparities among the homeless student population in many States and LEAs but we do not collect this data nationally. This slide reminds of how important it is to coordinate educational services across many “at risk” groups of students.

Before I turn the floor back over to John, we can take your questions about definitions and data for about 5 minutes. Would anyone like to ask a question or make a comment now?

Slide 11: SEA Coordination

Thank you, Gary. In this next part, we have several slides citing sections of Title I, Part A of the ESEA, as well as the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act to support our understanding of program coordination requirements. Hopefully, we can cover these citations quickly, but we’d like to give you as much of the exact language as possible. Neither statute is particularly descriptive or prescriptive about coordination requirements, including of course how the LEA homeless reservation is to be determined. Therefore, we’ve pulled out all the elements and will later review them as a type of calendar or cycle for both SEA and LEA coordination. This slide establishes the SEA’s responsibility for coordination over the LEA (read).

Slide 12: LEA Requirements for Coordination

Description is a key element of these requirements, so we expect LEAs to describe how they address the educational needs of homeless students served by the Title I program as well as how they coordinate with the McKinney-Vento subgrant program or homeless liaison in implementing McKinney-Vento requirements (for all LEAs). Even where an amount is reserved to provide comparable services for homeless students in non-participating or non-Title I schools, a citation we left out—sec 1113(c)(3)(A)—we need to see a description of those services. These services may also be offered at shelters or other places where homeless students reside.

Slide 13: Schoolwide Programs

We've often heard or been asked whether an LEA homeless reservation is necessary if all schools in a district operate schoolwide programs. Strictly speaking they do not; however, we expect some description of how those programs will address the educational needs of homeless children and youth and coordinate with housing programs, as appropriate. We also encourage LEAs and schools with SWPs to involve housing program staff serving homeless children and youth, especially educational advocates, in the planning and evaluation of the Title I program.

Slide 14: McKinney-Vento Act and Title I, Part A

The Act authorizing our Education for Homeless Children and Youth program actually says less about Title I serving homeless students than the ESEA. However, here are two important points of SEA and LEA coordination.

Slide 15: How does Title I help homeless students?

The next few slides summarize these points of coordination at both levels in a way that is more accessible to the practitioner. The second bullet point underscores that Title I services may be provided at a shelter, transitional living program or camp ground, for example, where homeless students reside. The third bullet establishes that it is allowable to reserve funds to provide educationally-related support services for homeless students already enrolled in a Title I school and served by the Title I program. This became an important point in 2009 with the availability of stimulus funds and concurrent large increases in homeless student enrollment.

Slide 16: Title I, Part A ARRA Fiscal Guidance

So our next slide cites the Guidance and highlights some uses of these funds which may have been allowed or not by SEAs in the past but were not easy to find in writing. The homeless education field was very excited to have this additional guidance for determining use of funds and planning reservation amounts. It includes:

1. Clothing, shoes and undergarments for physical education, where uniforms are required or to attend school, if no other community or district source is available.
2. The provision of dental, physical and mental health services, not just the pre-screening and referral. Of course, this would be on a per pupil basis and be considered essential for enrollment or attendance in school.
3. Food, eyeglasses and personal school or hygiene supplies.
4. Various student test fees such as for the ACT, SAT, AP and IB, or GED.

Slide 17: Some Ways SEAs have Advised LEAs to Determine Reservations

Because the law does not prescribe a particular method or percentage, for many years our State coordinators and TA Center have advised LEAs on a range of possible methods which have been condoned by the department. As you may know, we haven't cited an SEA or LEA for reserving too

much from Title I yet but we often comment on whether an amount is sufficient when we are interviewing LEAs or reviewing reservation amounts across the State. We appreciate the large number of reservations you must check every year, but please bear in mind how important this one is for homeless students, their families and the housing programs serving them after school.

Slide 18: Review of SEA Program Coordination Points

At the risk of some redundancy, here is where we review the points of coordination at each level as a cycle, although not exactly year-round.

At the SEA level, you are reviewing consolidated LEA applications, including program plans or narratives and budgets not only for the LEA program but perhaps for Schoolwide program plans. The reservation amount and use is very important to describe. Some services are self-evident, but a minimal reservation amount should have more justification than less that other community and district resources are available to address the distinct educational needs of homeless students served by the program. At the SEA level, we ask that you ensure that McKinney-Vento subgrant programs are coordinated with Title I, Part A and that parents and others are involved in the program, its planning and evaluation.

Slide 19: LEA Program Coordination Points

One point to emphasize at this level is how important the methodical use of actual data on homeless student numbers, needs and academic performance is. Besides the description of program coordination in the annual Title I, Part A program plan, there should be periodic or regular communication between the LEA coordinator and homeless liaison, including monitoring of data and performance. I'd like to make a special mention of a technical assistance guide published by the National Center for Homeless Education in May 2010 that provides various tools for schools, LEAs and SEAs to determine whether programs are suitably addressing the educational needs of homeless students. It's called: *Educating Homeless Children and Youth: Conducting Needs Assessments and Evaluating Services - A Guide for*

SEAs, LEAs, and Local Schools. We will give you the web link to our TA Center at the end of this presentation and you can find it by searching by topic under Evaluation.

Slide 20: SEA Examples of Coordination

We will be able to take questions in a few minutes, but before we do, I want to highlight some SEAs and LEAs for their model coordination of the programs. You may have heard them mentioned by us before and we do want to hear new examples as programs develop but these have held up to scrutiny over the past few years:

- New Hampshire and perhaps other smaller sized SEAs have State coordinators who are also Title I consultants. The New Hampshire coordinator, Dr. Linda Thistle-Elliott, has stayed with both programs for years, does a great job coordinating all aspects of the McKinney-Vento program, including Title I, Part A, and now teaches on-line teacher education courses in homeless education as an adjunct faculty member. The bullets on the slide highlight features of program coordination, including joint planning, joint training, and joint monitoring. Furthermore, the State coordinator must approve all Title I budget amendments pertaining to the LEA homeless reservation.
- Louisiana has a nearly full-time State coordinator and Laverne Dunn stands out for her dedication to make a manual of program coordination, including with Title I. She has created a formal process in which LEA applications with reservation amounts under a threshold of, I believe, \$300 are sent to her for follow-up before approval. There must be an assurance and description of other resources for homeless students if an LEA is unwilling to meet this threshold. Many of course, exceed it.

Slide 21: LEA Examples of Coordination

While we have North and South for SEA examples, we have some Midwest and Southwest for our LEA examples. St. Paul, MN is a district I got to know when I was the State coordinator there a few years

ago. Its program stands out for the way in which it has used a formula to determine the reservation amount (always subject to negotiation) and the relatively large team of partial FTE's supported by this reservation to ensure that comparable services are being provided at shelters, non-Title I schools, and district wide.

You may notice that these model LEAs are reserving about \$400-\$500 per pupil and Albuquerque, New Mexico has a very comprehensive, coordinated program of wrap-around social and health services for its large number of students experiencing homelessness during the year.

Slides 22-24:

We are eager to hear your examples, comments and question. We have 10 minutes and will also respond to questions typed in the chat function. At the end, our SASA moderators have a few announcements and an evaluation survey for you. On this slide, you can see the links to our program page, TA Center and the Title I, Part A ARRA fiscal guidance featured earlier. Contact information for Gary Rutkin and me is at the end. We'll both be at the Title I conference in Tampa and look forward to seeing many of you in person. We'll be discussing interagency coordination between education and housing agencies at the Federal, State and local levels over the past year, the role Title I, Part A plays in this, and featuring some LEA examples.